

Essay on ethnography: same race dating

[Design](#), [Photography](#)



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Culture

Ethnography: Same Race Dating

Introduction

In many ways race is regarded as the physiological differences among people, which are being codified by language, values, culture, and other explicit sorting that comes to everyone's head when talking about segregation by characteristics. Among the many factors that determines racial identity is through skin color where light colored skin were identified as someone from the Western hemisphere. Even in the Western regions where the majority of its population was identified as light skin individuals, the mix of other skin tones creates another set of racial subtype. One example is the Hispanics or primarily people from South America. Hispanics encompasses a mix of brown skin-toned and light skin-toned population. The subtyping of a single race based on the amount of skin pigments also constitutes a shifting paradox of social cohesion.

The subtyping of racial skin tone is becoming a standard for social integration, social capital, and human interaction particularly in setting expectations when selecting a life-long partner. The study aims to explore the aspects of human interaction taking focus on dating preferences using the concept of skin color among Hispanics. In this study, human perceptions about the likeability of a person for a date based on the lightness or darkness of the Hispanic skin will be determined. Furthermore, the study follows a qualitative approach where interviews were done to obtain insights from both male and female groups about their preference when it comes to choosing a date based on the person's skin tone. However, the study limits itself within the Hispanic ethnicity in order to determine whether or not people who belong in a single race would show an "anti" behavior against the members of their own ethnic association. As an early assumption, it is apparent that Hispanics with lighter skin is most likely to be taken out on a date than Hispanics with darker skin.

Literature Review

Racism, discrimination, and or cultural prejudice have been the subject of several sociological studies in the past, but little about the prejudice within the same race was explored particularly on the subject of dating. Hunter (2002) examined the role of skin tone when it comes to predicting human interaction. In the study, skin color was considered as a fundamental social currency. Furthermore, the study explored the impact of skin color in as the basis of beauty. It is apparent from the study lighter skin color became a social capital for women in terms of serving as a stratifying agent in accumulating spousal status, income, career success, and education. The

data used for study was drawn from the National Survey of Black Americans in 1980 and the National Chicano Survey. Although the source of data is more than 20 years old, it is still considered as the most effective source considering the nature of the subject being examined. Among the important findings in the said survey is the evidence suggesting that light-skinned Mexican-Americans and African-Americans tend to finish higher educational attainment as compared to the their darker-skinned counterpart.

In addition to higher educational attainment, lighter-skinned Hispanic and African-Americans tend to acquire higher paying jobs, making them on top of the subject category when it comes to earning power. Lastly, lighter-skinned women of color tend to get married to male of higher status than their darker-skinned counterpart. The significance of the aforementioned findings in this study, is by providing the evidentiary element to the assumption that lighter-skinned Hispanics has the higher probability of being taken for a date for women, and the male being able to persuade the women to go with them for a date than the darker-skinned counterpart. The literature provides the theoretical grounding for this study where the context of advantage of having a lighter skin among the women color was established. On the other hand, the concept of appeal or the likeability of light-skinned Hispanics against the darker-skinned Hispanics is still yet to be established.

The study by Weaver (2005) showed how skin color, and race are detrimental to be a preferred candidate. Although the study was conducted using the concept of mixed method approach, the data it used to substantiate the evaluation of effective appeal between the people of color versus the ones referred to as whites was drawn from a survey experiment

conducted in 2004. The experiment is composed of 2, 138 respondents, which represents a conservative percentage of the people of color within a given square kilometer. The demographic distribution was measured using the descriptive statistics. The basis of comparison to determine appeal of one person to another is the local Mayoral election held at Atlanta in 2004. The objective of the experiment is to determine if race and skin color may influence the voting behavior and preference of the people.

The results of the survey were obtained using ANNOVA and cross tabulations where it shows that the candidates for the 2004 Atlanta elections with lighter skin gains more appeal as opposed to other candidates with either darker and not so fair skin. The results of the study concludes that skin including its physical conditions can be considered as instrumental for gaining people's attention particularly in a competitive environment. The important caveat emerges through survey with regards to skin color. The results of the research on race and skin color in determining the preferred candidate is imperative to the objectives of this study because it provides the principles of understanding how people react and create preferences.

Methodology

This study employs the concept of ethnographic approach where human interactions were being observed and analyzed in its real world setting to establish cultural phenomena. In terms of identifying the relationship of skin tone to dating preference, the methodological design includes a fieldwork in which people including their parents were interviewed about their views on people of people when it comes to choosing a date. In the initial observation of Hispanic couples while spending an hour of sitting in a coffee shop in a

mall, a pattern emerges such as Hispanic couples of both lighter-skinned. There are instances of couples where one has darker skin while the other has lighter skin. However, the most prominent pattern in the initial observation is that it is seldom that both individuals have dark skin. To reinforce the concept of the study and its selected methodology the process of selecting participants for the interview was randomized using free online classified ads.

Using the open source classified ads website craigslist, an invitation to participate in an interview was posted and asked the interested parties to leave their contact details for a call back. Once the interested parties have sent their consent to participate in the activity. A waiver and disclaimer form together with the information sheet was sent through email in order to prepare the participants for what they are going to expect in the interview. There were a total of 200 individuals who replied to the posted advertisement in Craigslist, which is composed of 130 females and 70 males. The interview sheet was not yet provided to the participants, instead a simple survey was provided from which each person will have to rate each of the five pictures using the star ratings, where 5-stars is the highest and 1-star is the lowest. It is imperative that the participants will not be made aware that they need to choose either the photo of a person with a lighter skin, but will only need them rate each picture according to their liking. The star rating will demonstrate how each participant would choose their ideal date. The photos to use for the short exercise were obtained from a royalty-free website and the researcher ensures that there is enough permission to use to the photos for whatever purpose it may serve best. In

In addition, the male participants will be sent with a batch of female photos while the female participants will receive the set of male photos. The star ratings will be the measuring unit for this study as the result of the star voting will demonstrate how the participants perceive the person in the photo as their ideal date. A descriptive statistics was employed in the presentation of the results, which will be used as the conclusive basis for this study. In terms of personal interviews, family members and select friends were approached to be live correspondents for the interview. The interview will only consist of five open ended questions and five multiple-choice questions. The significance of the data obtained from the interview is to demonstrate how individuals perceived their ideal date considering skin color as the preference factor.

The online survey correspondents were allowed to remain anonymous in the event that they wish not to be named for reference. It is the same discretion given to the live interview participated by family and friends. Analyzing the data from the star rating exercise and interview encompasses the answer to fundamental question of “ are the darker-skinned Latin-Americans less preferred by the people within its ethnic discourse as compared to Latin-Americans with lighter skin tone.” Another important question that this study aims to answer is “ whether or not skin tone is a factor that affects dating preferences.” The study encompasses a limitation in terms of ethnic coverage because the focus population is only limited to Hispanics.

Discussion/Analysis

The preliminary part of the study is an observation made when in a coffee shop inside a mall. The observation went on for one hour and the number of

Latin-Americans couple that passed by within the one-hour period is 16 couples.

It can be observed from the data that Latin-American male prefers a lighter-skinned female as a partner. One of the reasons that skin tone is not much of a big deal for male Hispanics is because male are less conscious about the attribution of beauty in their skin tone. Furthermore, males are typically more concerned about character and masculinity skin color does not constitute greater relevance. On the other hand, only three out of the 17 couples observed appears to demonstrate a pairing where the male has lighter skin than the female. However, when observing couples that both has lighter skins, it comes as a surprise that the likeability of both lighter-skinned individuals is similar to Hispanic males with lighter skin paired with a darker-skinned female.

The result of the field observation suggests a patten in which finding a perfect partner was influenced by skin color. After the observation, the data gathering process moves to the online picture survey. Take note that the individuals in the photos are all Latin Americans. The correspondents were sent with a survey kit that includes the photos of the Hispanics with varying skin tones. All of the 200 individuals who responded to the Craigslist ads were given a choice to go for a live interview or just take part of the survey. The star system ratings provide the perspectives of each gender when it comes to skin tone preference. For instance photo#1 in both male and female represents the Latin Americans with the lightest skin and the skin color darkens in tone as the picture goes from two to five. Based on the obtained data, it appears that female preference does not demonstrate a

particular pattern as observed from the stars that Male photo#4 received from female correspondents although the guy in the aforementioned photos just a few notches lighter than the male in photo#5 and is darker in skin color as compared to the male in photo#1. However, when the male correspondents were asked to give star ratings for the female photos, it appears that the lighter the female's skin, the more gets more votes.

Conclusion

Dating or choosing someone to be with encompasses a certain consideration to darkness or lightness of the other person's skin. The preferences vary between genders because of the differences of what is beautiful for a Hispanic male and what is beautiful for a Hispanic female. Therefore, skin tone still matters for people in making a decision whether or not he/she would go for a date with a person from the same ethnic. The prevalence of the typical perception that having a lighter skin is beautiful still depends on individual perspectives of what is pretty and what is not. Deciding to go on a date based on the person's skin color is a result of the changing cultural perspective on the concept of attractiveness and desirability.

Bibliography:

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Weaver, Vesla. "Race, Skin Color, and Candidate Preference." Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Cambridge, MA, April 6-10, 2005. Accessed December 15, 2014. <http://www.uky>.

edu/AS/PoliSci/Peffley/pdf/Weaver%20Race,%20Skin%20Color,%20and
%20Candidate%20Preference. pdf.

Appendices

Interview Questionnaire (yes or no)

- Have you ever gone to a date even once? (If yes proceed, if no skip to picture exercise)
- Have you considered the person's skin color when you were asked or asking for a date?
- Would you consider dating a person with a darker/lighter skin than yours?
- Is it important to have a date with the person of the same ethnic background?
- As a male/female is the color of your skin determines your desirability?

(The next 5 questions refers to the picture exercises in the PowerPoint slides